Putting Together the "Legacy Trust"

► On the DNR-managed Chehalis Western Trail. Commissioner Sutherland joins DNR staff in a fitness test for agency

everal options exist to acquire Legacy Trust lands. In addition to accepting private donations of land or cash, the State could issue General Obligation Bonds to fund the purchase of Legacy Trust lands. Each year for 10 years, \$13.1 million would be needed to build the trust, consisting of about 60 percent forestlands and 40 percent commercial real estate assets.

The people of Washington State would own these properties, that generate a consistent source of non-tax funding dedicated to protecting the legacy of outdoor recreation and natural areas stewardship on state lands. The fully endowed Legacy Trust would provide the lion's share of this funding for this generation, and for generations to come.

Managing trust lands is what DNR does!

Since statehood, the State Trust Lands have provided funds for important public projects. And just since 1970, DNR's management has earned \$5.7 billion non-tax dollars — mostly to build the state's public schools and universities, and to help fund services in many counties.

Just as on other State Trust lands, DNR would sell timber from the new forested Legacy Trust lands, while protecting habitat; or commercial properties would be leased. Of course, rent rates and timber prices rise and fall, leading to a fluctuation of returns. But DNR has a proven track record on managing trust lands over time. On Legacy Trust lands, an average return of about 6.75 percent each year is expected.

For information, call DNR at 360-902-1000. DNR's website: http://www.dnr.wa.gov.



How the Legacy Trust would change things

In 1990 DNR's recreation program received almost \$3 million (in today's dollars) in Capital and General Fund Operating dollars. By 2001, this funding had dropped to less than \$740,000. For 2004, with many more visitors on state lands, the program received Capital funding of \$531,000, and no General Fund Operating dollars. All this would change with the Legacy Trust.

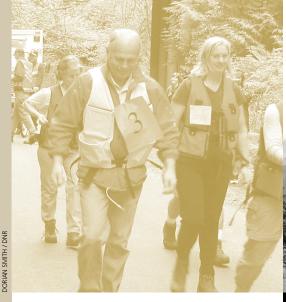
Revenue earned from Legacy Trust lands would begin to replace the current State General Fund share of the recreation and natural areas programs' budgets. The fully endowed Legacy Trust would provide about \$8.8 million per year —\$6.6 million for the program funding and \$2.2 million for trust management and reinvestment to keep the lands productive. This amount would meet the unfunded \$6.6 million needed to carry out safe, effective programs.

This funding would not take the place of other grants. Over time, new funds would replace the State General Fund share and complement the capital project funding from grants.

Benefits of Legacy Trust Funding

For 2.2 million acres of DNR-managed lands, the funds would aid the planning, building and maintaining of facilities and trail infrastructure, pay for environmental monitoring to protect habitat and water quality while providing recreation opportunities. Funds would help pay for law enforcement staff, campground hosts, testing of drinking water, cleanup of trash and vandalism damage; and for overseeing volunteer groups.

Stewardship of the natural areas would mean monitoring, offering more research and educational opportunities to universities and schools, and developing other compatible public access (depending on the site); and controlling invasive weeds and providing other protection.



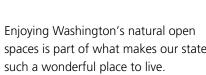
spaces is part of what makes our state

Unfortunately, as the number of visitors to these lands has grown, the funding needed to be good stewards has dwindled to almost zero. The taxpayers of Washington have invested billions of dollars, and to let invasive weeds. lawlessness and overuse destroy this legacy is simply irresponsible.

We must find a new, long-term source of funding that will provide a consistent stream of non-tax revenue for recreation and conservation. That's what the Legacy Trust is all about — protecting a legacy that is too important to ignore.

Without other choices, the Legacy Trust is the only option to protect that legacy.

Commissioner of Public Lands



▶ How would DNR generate funds to keep public lands open to the public?

Without new

SEE INSIDE

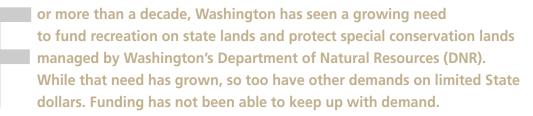
funding, how are

natural areas at risk?

recreation and

- What type of lands would be part of the **Legacy Trust?**
- How much money would the Legacy Trust generate each year? **SEE BACK PANEL**





What can be done?

Over the years a variety of solutions to this shortfall have been offered:

Increase property or other taxes — the apparent appetite for such tax increases is very low, and the competition for limited tax revenues is high.

Charge user fees — innumerable access points along forest roads make it difficult to consistently collect fees, and as a result, collection costs could be more than the fees. Fee collection also may increase liability, risking enormous judgments against the state.

Reduce costs by limiting access or **closing areas** — this violates a critical tenet: state lands should be open for recreation to Washington's citizens.

An innovative solution

A long-term solution is needed to provide dedicated and sustainable funding:

- ▶ Funding that doesn't come from taxes;
- ▶ Funding that doesn't rely on inconsistent revenue sources or compete with other important state programs for funding.

This solution is the Legacy Trust for **Recreation and Conservation**

The "Legacy Trust" would consist of commercial properties and forest lands, managed to produce revenue in the same business-like manner as other state trust lands. Revenue would pay for the stewardship of state natural areas, keep millions of acres of forest and other state lands open for recreation, and help secure the safety that families visiting the forests deserve. DNR would manage the new trust's lands to the high standards it manages other state trust lands.

> Strategically located forestland could be acquired for the

> > Legacy Trust — forests that help preserve a balance of developed areas, communities, and open space and habitat in forest landscapes across the state. In addition to providing revenue, the Legacy Trust's forests would support local jobs, communities, scenic beauty, and also keep land in forests that wildlife need as our state grows.



A Legacy at Risk



very year, more than nine million visitors enjoy DNR-managed lands. They come to fish in trout streams, ride horses, hunt, hike, and bike. They come to stay in horse camps, walk on wetland boardwalks and interpretive trails, and camp overnight. They come to do research on rare plants and native ecosystems. They come to enjoy their inheritance. | On the 2.2 million acres of State Trust forestlands, we have 85 campgrounds, 725 camp sites, 225 picnic units, 65 trailheads, 325 toilet buildings and 1,000 miles of approved trails. We also have 77 natural areas throughout the state, encompassing 125,000 acres. | The level of public use in the state's scenic vistas, natural areas, and passive and active recreation areas has outstripped our ability to maintain them, and provide safe public access, which requires constant and ongoing efforts.

Offering safe recreational opportunities and protecting special native ecosystems on state lands requires constant and ongoing efforts and a new source of support.

A few miles outside of Olympia, Rocky Prairie is the home to one of the last remaining populations of the Golden

Paintbrush in the world. The site even inspired one volunteer to join DNR's Natural Areas Program — a program she now manages. This precious and



important scientific opportunity is under threat from invasive species such as Scot's Broom. Each year, volunteers work to keep the location clear for the Paintbrush, but volunteers can't do it alone. Without funding for the tools and agency support they need, we risk wasting their effort and losing this important environmental legacy.

Imagine parking your car at the foot of the Willapa Hills, hiking a short distance to the

gateway of a 300-year-old forest, and meandering along an interpretive trail that describes the natural history and local heritage of these



grand survivors. Today, the 2,400-acre South Nemah Natural Resources Conservation Area is not accessible to the public. The rarest 50 acres of old growth Sitka spruce and western hemlock cannot be protected from poachers who make their way into the heart of the old forest to fell this precious resource, assured that no one is around to catch them. Well designed public access at South Nemah NRCA could open up this beautiful area, and add to DNR's ability to protect these irreplaceable trees.

Mt. Si Trailhead

Recreation sites located near urban areas require staffing. The Mt. Si Trailhead is one of the most heavily

used sites in

TRAIL CLOSED

the state, and is part of more than 250 miles of trails statewide at risk of closure. because there are no funds to maintain them.

Threats to Public Safety

The remote natural settings of our state forests that we so revere are also perfect places for illegal activity and drug labs. One of the largest marijuana crops ever discovered in Washington, worth six to nine million dollars, was found growing in Klickitat Forest.

Noxious Weeds

Controlling noxious and invasive weeds poses a problem for some of our most precious ecosystems, as well as for family farms where these weeds can damage valuable crops and livestock. DNR faces these problems, not only in Okanogan County where there are many neighboring farms, but all across Eastern Washington. Without resources, it is a losing battle that will increase the risk to state and private lands.

In the Capitol State Forest, two men were caught attempting to harvest about 500 marijuana plants. Our ability to provide a law enforcement presence on state lands is very limited, with only seven natural resources investigators to cover an area the size of Connecticut

Sites that are easily accessible and have no DNR presence fall prey to vandalism and illegal activities, compromising the security of people who are there to

enjoy the camping experience. No one wants

to go where garbage is regularly dumped and facilities have been destroyed This was the case at AJ Pat Kehn Campground, and we were forced to close it.

Dragoon Creek just north of Spokane is a large, popular camparound within a forested setting, near a small creek. It is one of 44 recreation sites that have no funding past July 1, 2004 and are at risk of closing.

During a decade of budget surpluses, **State General Fund Operating dollars for** recreation on trust lands dropped. For 2004, the program received no State **General Fund Operating dollars, and** faces an uncertain future.

\$2,000,000

The peak State reflects a \$1million **General Fund** allocation to match **Support for** a 2:1 stewardship challenge grant from **Natural Areas** 1,500,000 The Nature and Recreation Conservacy. by Fiscal Year (Operating) IN 2003 DOLLARS

1,000,000 Natural Areas 500,000 Recreation

90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 00 01 02 03 04 05

Alder Lake, outside of Eatonville, was another family recreation area in proximity



to the urban population of Tacoma, but the violence and criminal activity drove away the families, and the hosts were not equipped to handle

the gang shooting, assaults, drinking, prostitution, drugs, and other lawlessness that occurred there. In one season, a DNR officer arrested 70 people, impounded 19 cars, recovered stolen vehicles, and broke up gang violence and drug activity. Ultimately, the campground had to be closed.

Trout Lake Natural Area Preserve is a nationally recognized habitat and one of the largest



functioning wetland ecosystems in south-central Washington. The Trout Lake valley serves as habitat to many natural species, including one of only four known

populations of the Oregon Spotted Frog in our state. The community places great value on this wetland high in the Cascade foothills, and the NAP attracts volunteers who share the vision of this site as a preeminent community feature for educational programs and activities.

It is easy to understand why people pursue Table Mountain's scenic views,



high atop the Columbia Gorge Mountain meadows, forested slopes, and spectacular views of Mount Adams and Mount Hood are matched only by the dramatic geologic feature of

Table Mountain. Lacking public access to the Table Mountain NRCA, however, users have created trails connected to the trans-national Pacific Crest Trail. The most damaged user-built trail has now been closed, dramatically increasing foot traffic on the other user-built trail. As a result, the rare species and natural features we are seeking to protect are imperiled.